

## Care and Maintenance of Laptops



**NOTE:** Before starting, make sure the machine is turned off

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### KEYBOARD

- Tip the keyboard over, then blow away any loose objects out of the keyboard. The best way to do this is with a small can of compressed air available at office supply stores or Wal-Mart.
- To clean the keyboard of stray marks, rubbing alcohol works very well because it does not leave a residue. Always test it first in a spot on the corner of one key in case it reacts poorly with the plastic. Lightly dampen a soft lint free cloth and rub off any marks. If a key has dirt or something on it, a Q-tip with a small amount of rubbing alcohol works well.
- If a keys feel stuck, apply a small amount of alcohol from a Q-tip under the key, then work the key slowly up and down. When putting the Q-tip under the key do not force it, use extreme caution not to break the key off. After the key feels better, blow dry any excess alcohol away with compressed air or allow it to air dry.
- If numbers start to appear instead of letters after the cleaning, make sure the Num Lock key was not pressed during the cleaning (this also means the laptop was not turned off).

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### OUTER PLASTIC

- To clean the outer plastic on the machine, rubbing alcohol works very well. Endust for Electronics also works, but is more expensive and generally not around the house/office. Always test your cleaning product first in a spot on the bottom of the computer in case it reacts poorly with the plastic. Apply any cleaners sparingly.

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## SCREEN

- The laptop screen is more fragile than a desktop screen so extra care should be taken. Be careful not to leave a pen or pencil on the keyboard and shut the case, this generally leads to a broken screen.

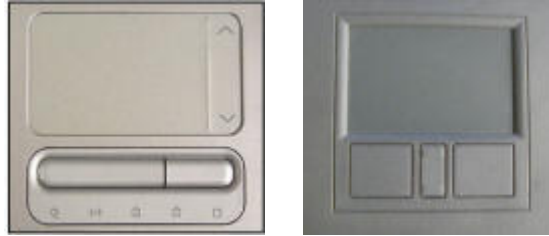


- The screen is softer and requires less pressure to clean. The cleaner of choice is water. A soft lint free cloth needs to be lightly dampened. An example of the amount of water would be if you wiped the dew off of the side of a glass with the cloth.
- When cleaning the screen, apply very light pressure. If too much pressure is applied the screen could be damaged. Lightly rub the screen to remove any dust and finger prints. Several light passes with the cloth are better than one hard one.
- Some think it looks funny to press on the laptops screen and see it make rainbow colors or leave it next to a magnet where it will do the same. Pressure or magnets are very bad for the screen and costly to repair. Magnetic devices include stereo speakers and some multimedia peripherals.

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## **TRACKPAD**

(The laptop version of a mouse)



- The best way to move the trackpad is with the point of your finger and a very light movement and touch. When using the flat part of the finger and a heavy touch, the trackpad usually will be unresponsive and jittery plus not last as long.
- Over time the trackpad will get dirty and need cleaning. The best cleaner for a trackpad is a clean lint free cloth dampened with water or Endust for Electronics.

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## **FOOD AND DRINK**

- It is easy to say no to food and drink, but not practical. The best thing to do is keep liquids free from the machine. An example of this is not to put a dewing drink on top of or near any of the machines components such as the trackpad or top of the case.
- When eating something that crumbs, keep the crumbs away from the keyboard, computer, and touchpad.

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## AC ADAPTER

- One problem that laptops experience is that the AC Adapter plug breaks out of the back of the machine. A common way that this happens is when the machine is being used on someone's lap and the plug rests on their leg. The pressure from the resting plug will cause it to break away from the logicboard. The repair is very expensive. The pictures below show the correct and incorrect way to position the laptop.

The correct way to position the laptop is with the plug having space between your knee and under no pressure.



The incorrect way to position the laptop is with the plug not having room under it and being held under pressure.



- When plugging in your AC adapter do not stretch it across a walkway. Problems arise not only because someone could trip and fall, but when tripped on, it usually breaks the AC adapter and the charging port on the computer.

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## TRANSPORTING

- When moving the laptop around inside, hold it with two hands and do not carry it by the top of the screen. The top of the screen is not designed to support weight and when the screen breaks the repair generally exceeds 500 dollars.
- When putting the laptop in your bag at night, turn it off through **Start, Shutdown, and Shutdown the Computer**. Simply shutting the lid is not enough, not all laptops are set to shutoff when the lid closes, in fact most are not. Many cases do not allow the machine to breath so it is likely to overheat if left in a computer bag for even a short time.
- The laptop case is really designed for casual carrying and minor protection, so care still needs to be taken. Try to avoid letting it be free in the trunk of your car or tossing it when setting it down.

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## THE LAPTOP'S ENVIRONMENT

- When taking the laptop home, it is best taken inside at night.
- Do not leave it laying around. If taken, **you** pay for it, **not** Morningside College.
- If for some reason the laptop remains outside in the car in the winter, allow it to warm up for about 15 minutes to room temperature before starting it up. Excessive cold (such as inside a car trunk on a -30 degree day) can cause permanent and costly damage to your computer.
- If for some reason your laptop is left outside in the car in the summer, allow it to cool to room temperature before starting it. Excessive heat (such as a car on a 100 degree day) can cause permanent and costly damage to your computer.